

Message Text

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 BELGRA 01390 021604Z

64

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 IO-11

DHA-02 SAJ-01 ACDA-05 DPW-01 /079 W

----- 089974

R 021520Z MAR 76

FM AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5794

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMCONSUL ZAGREB

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE BELGRADE 1390

E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: PINT PFOR PINS YO

SUBJ: SENSITIVITY TO FOREIGN CRITICISM ON HUMAN RIGHTS

1. THERE HAVE BEEN SEVERAL RECENT SIGNS OF YUGOSLAV SENSITIVITY TO CRITICISM ON HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES. TRIAL OF LAWYER SRDJA POPOVIC, ACCUSED OF SPREADING FALSE INFORMATION BECAUSE OF STATEMENTS HE MADE IN COURT WHILE DEFENDING A POLITICAL DISSIDENT, HAS BEEN ADJOURNED INDEFINITELY. BERNARD LEVIN HAD PARTICULARLY STUNG YUGOSLAVS WITH ARTICLE IN "LONDON TIMES" (LATER BROADCAST ON BBC) ABOUT POPOVIC CASE AND GENERAL STATE OF POLITICAL FREEDOM IN YUGOSLAVIA. "POLITIKA" REPLIED WITH EDITORIAL DECRYING SUCH A "COLD-WAR, ANTI-YUGOSLAV" ANALYSIS. HUNGER STRIKE OF MIHAILO MIHAJLOV HAS RECEIVED NO DOMESTIC PUBLICITY; FOREIGN PRESS COMMENT HAS NOT EVEN APPEARED IN TANJUG SUMMARY CIRCULATED ONLY TO ELITE. (IT IS ALSO POSSIBLE THAT POSTPONEMENT OF DECISION IN APPEAL OF AMCIT LASZLO TOTH IS RELATED TO DESIRE NOT TO FUEL FOREIGN ATTACKS.)

2. YUGOSLAVS WERE PROMPTED BY FOREIGN CRITICISM TO
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 BELGRA 01390 021604Z

ISSUE STATEMENTS ON MIHAJLOV AND ON POLITICAL PRISONERS

IN GENERAL. SECRETARY FOR INFORMATION CALLED IN FOREIGN JOURNALISTS TO STATE THAT MEDICAL EXAMINATION SHOWED MIHAJLOV TO BE IN NO DANGER. SIMILARLY "POLITIKA" DEVOTED ARTICLE TO STATEMENT BY SENIOR OFFICIAL OF FEDERAL SECRETARIAT FOR JUSTICE AND ORGANIZATION OF FEDERAL ADMINISTRATION THAT, CONTRARY TO FOREIGN CRITICISM OF THE NUMBER OF POLITICAL ARRESTS, ONLY 28 OUT OF OVER 1,000 PEOPLE CONVICTED OF POLITICAL CRIMES IN 1974 WERE GIVEN SENTENCES OF LONGER THAN TWO YEARS. HE STRESSED THAT MOST OF THESE POLITICAL CRIMES WERE "RELATIVELY MINOR", SUCH AS INSTIGATING NATIONAL OR RELIGIOUS INTOLERANCE. HE SAID THAT MOST OF THE SENTENCES ARE SHORT AND MANY ARE SUSPENDED. HE FURTHER STATED THAT THE OVERALL NUMBER OF POLITICAL CONVICTIONS IN 1974 WAS ABOUT THE SAME AS IT HAD BEEN FOR THE PREVIOUS TWO YEARS.

3. COMMENT: TAKEN TOGETHER THESE DEVELOPMENTS INDICATE THAT FOREIGN CRITICISM OF YUGOSLAV TREATMENT OF POLITICAL DISSIDENTS STRIKES A SENSITIVE NERVE AND MAY OCCASIONALLY HAVE A SUBSTANTIAL IMPACT. WHILE FIGURES ON ARRESTS AND SENTENCES ARE MEANT TO BE COMFORTING, THEY CONFIRM THAT WELL OVER THREE THOUSAND PEOPLE WERE CONVICTED FOR POLITICAL "CRIMES" IN 1972-74 PERIOD ALONE. AND JUST THE FIRST TWO MONTHS OF THIS YEAR PRESS HAS REPORTED 23 PEOPLE SENTENCED TO MORE THAN TWO YEARS IMPRISONMENT FOR POLITICAL CRIMES, COMPARED TO 28 IN ALL 1974. SWEITZER

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: HUMAN RIGHTS, DISSIDENT FACTIONS, GOVERNMENT REACTIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 02 MAR 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: morefirh
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976BELGRA01390
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760079-0682
From: BELGRADE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t197603106/aaaadozq.tel
Line Count: 89
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: morefirh
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 07 MAY 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <07 MAY 2004 by CunninFX>; APPROVED <07 JUL 2004 by morefirh>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SENSITIVITY TO FOREIGN CRITICISM ON HUMAN RIGHTS
TAGS: PINT, PFOR, PINS, SHUM, YO
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006